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- ART. III.—1. *Historical Lectures on the Life of our Lord Jesus Christ, being the Hulsean Lectures for the Year 1859.* By C. J. ELЛИCOTT, B. D. Boston : Gould and Lincoln. 1862. pp. 382.
2. *The Life of our Lord upon the Earth ; considered in its Historical, Chronological, and Geographical Relations.* By SAMUEL J. ANDREWS. New York : Charles Scribner. 1863. pp. 624.

“THE life of Jesus on earth was in the highest sense a human one, and it is this fact that gives us the key to the Gospels as real historic records.”

“O, let us not forget, in all our investigations, that the history of the life of Christ is a history of *redemption*,—that all the records which the Eternal Spirit of truth has vouchsafed to us bear this indelible impress, and are only properly to be seen and understood from this point of contemplation. It is the history of the *Redeemer* of our race that the Gospels present to us ; the history, not of Jesus of Nazareth, but of the Saviour of the world ; the record, not of merely idealized perfections, but of redemptive workings, —‘ My Father worketh hitherto, and I work ’ ; and he who would presume to trace out that blessed history, without being influenced by this remembrance in all his thoughts and words, must be prepared to find himself adding one more unhonored name to the melancholy list of those who have presumed to treat of these mysteries, with the eclectic and critical spirit of the so-called biographer, —the biographer (O strangely inappropriate and unbecoming word!) of Him in whom dwelt the whole fulness of the Godhead.”

These brief citations—the first from Andrews, the second from Ellicott—indicate the widely different stand-points of their respective works, so nearly identical in title. The one, passing by all questions respecting the authorship and the inspiration of the Gospels, assumes that they are genuine historical documents, and statements of facts ; and deals with them as such, with a view to portray in their just geographical and chronological relations the external aspects of the earthly life of Christ. The other, assuming not only the credibility of the Gospels as a history, but their plenary inspiration as well, and regarding “the usual tone of mere historical writing” upon the closing scenes of our Lord’s ministry as “little short of

profanity," attempts to set forth "the outward connection of those incidents that inspired pens have been moved to record of the life of God's Eternal Son."

But while the stand-point of the one is the external history of the life of the Son of Man, and that of the other is the inspired record of the incarnate Son of God, both authors agree in this,— the attempted reproduction of the life of Christ in its historical unity of time, place, manner, and relations. Mr. Andrews, while "recognizing the supernatural elements in the evangelic narratives wherever they exist," and believing as devoutly as does Bishop Ellicott that Jesus was "very God," has written his book with this simple purpose in view:—"to arrange the events of the Lord's life, as given us by the Evangelists, so far as possible, in a chronological order, and to state the grounds of this order; and to consider the difficulties as to matters of fact which the several narratives, when compared together, present; or are supposed by modern criticism to present." Bishop Ellicott, while rejecting with pious indignation all naturalistic criticisms as "discreditable and unreasonable attempts to throw doubt on the credibility of the sacred narrative," nevertheless in his notes—which alone give value to his book for the scholar—is at much pains to refute such "idle and mischievous doubts," upon critical and historical grounds; and to exhibit the connection of events in the life of Christ, in "a regular continuity of narrative," as if he himself were writing a biography of the man Christ Jesus, from the materials furnished by the four Evangelists.

Using these authors mainly for illustration and confirmation upon minor details, we propose to invert their method with regard to the life of Christ, and to inquire what evidences of the reality of that life are to be found in the historical and geographical allusions of the Evangelists, and in the archæology of Palestine as illustrated by traditions and remains, and by hereditary and immutable customs.

A list of geographical names, or a genealogical register such as opens the Gospel of Matthew and the First Book of the Chronicles, has no attractions for the plain reader of the Bible. But these very minutiae of names, places, and dates, in a book of such antiquity, form a local and historical foundation for

its facts, help us to verify its statements, and serve to certify its authenticity ; and thus the religion of the Bible is definitely and permanently attached to the soil and the history of our world.

It has been common of late to criticise the Bible upon the score of accuracy in its details ; to admit in the main the truth of its principles and the beauty of its moral sentiments, but to impeach its statements of fact, whether scientific or historical, and thus to impair confidence in the book as an authority. Bishop Colenso, while professing to believe that the Pentateuch "imparts to us revelations of the Divine will and character," yet maintains upon arithmetical grounds that "the so-called Mosaic narrative cannot be regarded as *historically true*." Similar criticism has been applied to the life of Christ. But the minute references of the Bible to places, names, and the events of contemporaneous history, serve to fasten its narratives in space and in time ; and thus are a means of establishing its truth as a history, and the reality of the persons and the events of which it speaks. Hence the study of Biblical geography and history bears a just relation to the supernatural events and the moral truths of the Bible ; for while this book in its miracles and doctrines is the most supernatural work in human language, it is at the same time the most matter-of-fact book of all antiquity, and the most capable of being tested, illustrated, and confirmed by geography, history, and monuments.

To show this, we have only to suppose that, instead of the Bible as it is, we had the general statement, that, at a time far back in the history of the world, there had appeared to men a remarkable Being, with a halo about his head, who said and did many wondrous things ; that he had once made a sea stand still in the midst of a storm ; that he had created bread for a hungry multitude in the desert ; that he had gone up to the top of a mountain, and had there been transfigured into a divinity ; and that he had finally ascended from a mountain into the clouds ;— and yet in all this story there was no hint of the place or the time of these occurrences,— what sea, what mountain, what desert, what country, among what people, in what age ;— we should have a feeling of the unreality of the whole story, however we might prize its moral lessons. It

would be shifted from the region of history to that of poetry. How differently would the truths of the Bible impress us, did they come in the garb of Milton's Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained! Those two poems work up into the form of an epic the great events and sequences of the fall and the redemption of man ; they aim to reproduce the supernatural features of the Bible ; they embody its precepts, prophecies, and doctrines ; — in a word, they are Biblical throughout. But though composed in a narrative form, and teaching the very facts of the Bible, they are so imaginative in their cast, that, if they constituted our Bible, we should be puzzled to know how much of reality, and especially of Divine authority, to attach to them. Though Milton's poems abound in geographical and historical allusions, which localize the scenes of their principal events, yet their fictitious incidents and imaginary conversations, and the drapery of fancy in which they are clothed, give an air of unreality even to scenes borrowed from Biblical narratives. But if we go further, and suppose all local and historical groundwork to be removed from the Bible, its personages, its events, its teachings, would float before us in the dream-light of poetic fiction. We might accept it as teaching truth, or as founded upon truth, but we should not feel it to be the real, personal, living book it is. As to the effect of reality upon the mind, it would be more like Homer's *Odyssey* than like Milton's *Paradise Lost*. The *Odyssey* abounds in beautiful and noble sentiments, and ends in the triumph of fidelity and virtue. It gives play to supernatural and divine agency in human affairs. It pictures the human race as it stood midway “between Paradise and the vices of later heathenism.” Many of its scenes are so far reproductions of real life, that it serves as a text-book of the manners and customs of its age. Even its legends may have had some original basis of fact. Yet, when we come to questions of time and place, we find that “the geographical particulars of the wanderings are dislocated and distorted. Distances are misstated, or cease to be stated at all. The names of countries are massed together in such a way as to show that the poet had no idea of a particular mode of juxtaposition for them. Topographical or local features, of a character such as to identify a description with some partic-

ular place or region as its prototype in nature, are erroneously transposed to some situation which, from general indications, we can see must be upon a different and perhaps distant part of the surface of the globe. At certain distances, the mode of geographical handling becomes faint, mistrustful, and indistinct";* — and thus the poem itself is thrown back from the world of reality into the shadowy ideal world. We can never assure ourselves whether there really was a Ulysses; — or, if there was such a person, where he travelled, and where he found his home. His story does not impress us with the sense of reality which we have in reading the story of Abraham, of Joseph, or of Moses, though these date from a more remote antiquity. In respect to their demonstrable reality as historic representations, "the Homeric poems are like a broad lake outstretched in the distance, which provides us with a mirror of one particular age and people, alike full and marvellous, but which is entirely dissociated by an interval of many generations from any other records, except such as are of the most partial and fragmentary kind. The Holy Scriptures are like a thin stream, beginning from the very fountain-head of our race, and gradually but continuously finding their way through an extended solitude, into times otherwise known, and into the general current of the fortunes of mankind." †

This identification of Biblical narratives with geographical localities and with historical events — with known places in the world and known actualities in history — makes the Bible for every age a real and living book, belonging to mankind, capable of being verified by unimpeachable testimony, — its matters of fact written upon the physical features of Egypt, of the desert, of Palestine, and corroborated by the records and monuments of the Jews, the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Romans. Its story of Shishak is illustrated by the hieroglyphics on the southwest wall of the main temple of Karnak ; the stories of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, by the cuneiform inscriptions of Bir and Behistun. The historical allusions of the New Testament tally with the contem-

* Gladstone, Homer and the Homeric Age, Vol. III. p. 253.

† Ibid., Vol. II. p. 521.

poraneous fragments of classic history, with the names and titles of Roman officials and the very coins of Roman colonies. Thus minutely is the Bible linked with matters of fact in the world to which it brings, professedly, a revelation from heaven. In this view, the study of Biblical history and geography has been introduced into some of our colleges, as a necessary part of a liberal education.

In pursuing this line of inquiry, chiefly with respect to the geographical attestations of the life of Christ, we shall adhere for the most part to the narrative of Luke, whose references to the contemporaneous political history and geography of Syria are more full and more specific than those of the other Evangelists. Indeed, the preface to Luke's Gospel seems to invite this scrutiny,—“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee, in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.” But at the very outset we are met with the vexed question of Cyrenius (*Quirinus*), whom Luke mentions as governor of Syria at the date of the taxing that summoned Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Neander almost concedes that Luke has fallen into an anachronism; perhaps by mistaking the assessment under Herod for the census which occurred twelve years later. “Nevertheless,” he adds, “Quirinus may have been actually present at this assessment, not, indeed, as governor of the province, but as imperial commissioner; for Josephus expressly says that he held many other offices before he was governor of Syria, at the time of the second census.”* According to Hase, “Luke carries the mother to Bethlehem by means of a Roman census, which is not in accordance with the Roman method of taking the census, and which only by means of forced explanations can be freed from the suspicion of being a mistake for the census of Quirinus, ten years later.”† But the researches of Zumpt have created a strong

* Leben Jesu, Cap. III. § 16, note.

† Life of Jesus, Clarke's transl., p. 42.

presumption in favor of the literal accuracy of Luke's statement; and the artless combination of the Jewish mode of registration with the Roman decree of taxation is one of those nice correspondences which compel us to accept the fact as stated.

Mr. Andrews meets the difficulties connected with this taxing fairly and thoroughly. He makes no attempt to explain away the obvious meaning of Luke, nor to provide conjectural emendations of authentic history, but shows, from a candid comparison of all known data, that "in various ways the difficulties connected with the taxing may be met, (though it cannot be said that they are all yet removed,) if we assume that Cyrenius was but once governor of Syria. But we have strong historical evidence that he twice filled this office."* We give this evidence in Mr. Andrews's own words, from his preliminary "Chronological Essays":—

"It is at this point that the researches of Zumpt have for us special importance. In his list of Syrian governors (ii. 149), extending from B. C. 30 to A. D. 66, we find the interval from 748–758 thus filled: P. Q. Varus, 748–750, or 6–4 B. C. P. S. Qurinius (Cyrenius), 750–753, or 4–1 B. C. M. Lollius, 753–757, or 1 B. C. to 3 A. D. C. M. Censorinus, 757–758, or 3–4 A. D. After Censorinus follows L. V. Saturninus, already mentioned, from 758–760, or 4–6 A. D., who is succeeded by P. S. Qurinius for the second time. This second administration extends from 760–765, or 6–11 A. D. If Zumpt be right in this order, Cyrenius was twice governor of Syria; but we are now concerned only with his first administration, or that from 750–753. Upon what ground does this statement rest?

"Our chief knowledge of Cyrenius is derived from Tacitus. He was of low origin, a bold soldier, and attained a consulship under Augustus in 742, and was afterward proconsul in the province of Africa. After this he conquered the Homonadenses, a rude people living in Cilicia, and obtained a triumph. He was subsequently made rector to Caius Cæsar when the latter was appointed governor of Armenia. At what time and in what capacity did he carry on the war against the Homonadenses? The time is thus determined. He was consul in 742. As it was a rule with Augustus to send no one sooner than five years after his consulship as legate to a province, he could not have been in Africa earlier than 747. But he was made rector to C. Cæsar in 753, after

the war against the Homonadenses, so that this war was between 747 and 753. In what capacity did he carry it on? Probably as governor of Syria. It is important to bear in mind that at this time there were two classes of provinces, the one under the immediate control of the Emperor, the other under the control of the Senate. The governors of the imperial provinces were called Legates, or Proprætors, and continued in office during the pleasure of the Emperor; those of the Senatorial provinces, Proconsuls, whose authority lasted only for one year. Syria and Cilicia were both provinces of the former kind, and administered by proprætors. The Homonadenses were a people living in Cilicia, but Cilicia belonged, from 25 B. C. down to the time of Vespasian, to the province of Syria. As Cyrenius had been proconsul in Africa, and as it was a rule that the same person should not be ruler over more than one of the consular or praetorian provinces under the care of the Senate, he could not have been governor of any of the provinces immediately adjacent, — Asia, Pontus, Bithynia, Galatia; he must, then, have been acting as governor of the province of Syria, and as legate of the Emperor.

“We cannot here enter into an investigation of the many intricate questions which belong to this point, and which are fully discussed by Zumpt. The result of all is, that Cyrenius became governor of Syria, as the successor of Varus, toward the end of 750, and continued in office till 753.

“It cannot be said that Zumpt demonstrates that Cyrenius was twice governor of Syria, but he certainly makes it highly probable. It is indeed possible that he was acting in the East at the time of the Lord’s birth as legate extraordinary, or as head of the census commission for Syria and the East. As, however, Luke’s language seems to mean that he did act as governor of Syria at this time, and as he is confirmed in this by many of the earliest Christian writers, the burden of proof lies upon those who dispute his accuracy. As the case now stands, we may assume that Cyrenius was so governor from the end of 750 till 753.” — pp. 5, 6.

Bishop Ellicott, who also gives a summary of proofs and authorities in his notes, is still more confident in the result.

“I feel certain no fair and honest investigator can study the various political considerations connected with this difficult question, without ultimately coming to the conclusion, not only that the account of St. Luke is reconcilable with contemporary history, but that it is confirmed by it, in a manner most striking and most persuasive. When we remember that the kingdom of Herod was not yet formally converted

into a Roman province, and yet was so dependent upon the imperial city as to be practically amenable to all its provincial edicts, how very striking it is to find, in the first place, that a taxing took place at a time when such a general edict can be proved to have been in force; and, in the next place, to find that that taxing in Judaea is incidentally described as having taken place according to the yet recognized customs of the country,—that it was, in fact, essentially imperial and Roman in origin, and yet Herodian and Jewish in form. How strictly, how minutely, consistent is it with actual historical relations, to find that Joseph, who under purely Roman law might, *perhaps*, have been enrolled at Nazareth, is here described by the Evangelist as journeying to be enrolled at the town of his forefathers, ‘because he was of the house and lineage of David’! This accordance of the sacred narrative with the perplexed political relations of the intensely national, yet all but subject Judæa, is so exact and so convincing, that we may even profess ourselves indebted to scepticism for having raised a question to which an answer may be given at once so fair, so explicit, and so conclusive.” — pp. 67, 68.

We are the more disposed to rely upon the accuracy of Luke in this instance, when we recall the remarkable corroboration by Dio Cassius of the much-disputed title, *ἀνθύπατος*, given by Luke* to Sergius Paulus, governor of Cyprus. It was alleged that, as Augustus had reserved Cyprus as an imperial province, it must have been governed by a legate, and that consequently Luke was in error in calling Sergius a proconsul,—an officer of the Senate and the people. But after hypercriticism had satisfied itself of the inaccuracy of the chronicler of the Acts of the Apostles, “a passage was discovered at length in Dio Cassius (53. 12) which states that Augustus subsequently relinquished Cyprus to the Senate in exchange for another province, and (54. 4) that it was governed henceforth by proconsuls,—*ἀνθύπατοι*. Coins, too, have been found, struck in the reign of Claudius, which confirm Luke’s accuracy. Bishop Marsh mentions one on which this very title, *ἀνθύπατος*, is applied to Cominius Proclus, a governor of Cyprus.”† At a time when the government of Cyprus, like that of New Orleans, alternated between a military and a civil administration, Luke is careful to give the exact title

* Acts xiii. 7.

† Prof. Hackett, Comm. *in loc.*

of the officer to whom he makes a mere passing allusion. We submit that the positive statements of an historian of such proved accuracy of detail cannot be impeached by the *omissions* of Josephus upon certain obscure passages of contemporary Roman history.

A test passage in Luke's Gospel, for both chronological and geographical accuracy, is the opening of his third chapter: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judæa, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high-priests, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness." Of the political geography of Syria, as indicated in this passage, we shall speak presently; we are now concerned with its chronological accuracy. The minor question whether the reign of Tiberius should date from his accession to the throne, or from his colleagueship with Augustus two years previous, is of no consequence to the correctness of the official grouping in Luke's text, though it is important for determining the dates of Christ's birth, of his ministry, and of his death. Bishop Ellicott inclines to the view of Wieseler and Tischendorf, that the fifteenth year of Tiberius dates from his accession, and coincides, "not with the first appearance, but the captivity, of John the Baptist."* Mr. Andrews prefers to date it from the colleagueship, since "we cannot, without doing St. Luke great injustice as a historian, suppose him to have been ignorant of a fact so public and notorious as that of the association of Tiberius with Augustus in the empire; and there is no good reason why, if knowing it, he should not have taken it as an epoch from which to reckon,"—especially as he then became the acting Emperor of the provinces of Asia Minor and Syria.

"To sum up our investigations upon this point, we find three solutions of the chronological difficulties which the statements of Luke present: 1st. That the fifteenth year of Tiberius is to be reckoned from the death of Augustus, and extends from August, 781, to August, 782.

* Page 106, note 1.

In this year, the Baptist, whose labors began some time previous, was imprisoned, but the Lord's ministry began in 780, before this imprisonment, and when he was about thirty years of age. 2d. That the fifteenth year is to be reckoned from the death of Augustus, but that the statement the Lord was about thirty years of age is to be taken in a large sense, and that he may have been of any age from thirty to thirty-five, when he began his labors. 3d. That the fifteenth year is to be reckoned from the year when Tiberius was associated with Augustus in the empire, and is therefore the year 779. In this case, the language 'he was about thirty' may be strictly taken, and the statement, 'the word of God came unto John,' may be referred to the beginning of his ministry.

"Of these solutions, the last seems to have most in its favor; and we shall assume that during the year 779, 'or the fifteenth year of Tiberius, reckoned from his colleagueship with Augustus, John began to preach and baptize.' — pp. 28, 29.

This question aside, we find in Josephus the fullest corroboration of the political subdivisions mentioned by Luke. Herod the Great, by a will which Augustus confirmed, divided his kingdom among three sons (excluding Philip I., the son of Mariamne), making Archelaus ethnarch of Judæa, Idumea, and Samaria; Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea; Herod Philip II., tetrarch of Batanæa, Trachonitis, Gaulonitis, and the region about Paneas. Herod died in the first year of Christ; but when Joseph, returning from Egypt, heard that Archelaus, who inherited his father's cruelty, "did reign in *Judea* in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither, but turned aside into the parts of *Galilee*," now under Herod Antipas, who would be less likely to concern himself about the rumored birth of a child-king of the Jews, at Bethlehem. The reign of Archelaus lasted but ten years; and after his deposition, Judæa and Samaria were united to the province of Syria, under Quirinus, but were governed by procurators, of whom Pontius Pilate was the sixth in order. Pilate sent Jesus to Herod Antipas, as soon as he heard that he was a Galilean, and "belonged to Herod's jurisdiction." Both Antipas and Philip had long reigns covering the whole period of the life of Christ.

But who was the Lysanias whom Luke mentions as contemporary with Pilate, Antipater, and Philip? Josephus men-

tions a Lysanias, governor of Chalcis, who died about B. C. 34, but does not specify Abilene as a part of his possessions. But he also states that the *Emperor Caligula* (about A. D. 38, ten years after the time mentioned by Luke) gave to Herod Agrippa the “tetrarchy of Lysanias,” reserving to himself “the Abila of Lysanias, and whatever was on Mount Lebanon.” Hence Robinson infers that there was another Lysanias, the son or grandson of the former, and “it thus appears that the specifications of Josephus, referring to a period several years later than the notice of Luke, are in perfect harmony with the latter.”* There was no reason why Josephus should mention this second Lysanias, since during his lifetime his tetrarchy did not come into direct connection with Jewish history; but when, after his death, his possessions were added to the dominions of Herod Agrippa, Josephus names them as the tetrarchy of Lysanias. On the other hand, as at the time of Luke’s writing Abilene had been absorbed into a Jewish kingdom, it was important for him, in fixing the date of John’s ministry, to refer to the old title of the tetrarchy.

“We can now see clearly,” says Mr. Andrews, “the reason why Luke, writing after Abilene had been made a part of the Jewish kingdom, should have mentioned the fact, having apparently so little connection with Gospel history, that at the time when the Baptist appeared this tetrarchy was under the rule of Lysanias. It was an allusion to a former well-known political division that had now ceased to exist, and was to his readers as distinct a mark of time as his mention of the tetrarchy of Antipas, or of Philip. This statement respecting Lysanias shows thus, when carefully examined, the accuracy of the Evangelist’s information of the political history of his times, and should teach us to rely upon it even when unconfirmed by contemporaneous writers.” — p. 136.

The accuracy of Luke’s information, as shown in this instance, is as striking as if one now writing of the emancipation movement in Missouri, by way of contrast should say, that, in the fourth year of President Pierce’s administration, Wilson Shannon being Governor of Kansas as a Federal Terri-

* Researches, III. 483.

tory, Charles Robinson being Governor elect in the State administration as organized under the Topeka Constitution, and Colonel E. V. Sumner being commander of the United States forces in the Territory, General David R. Atchison of Missouri, formerly President of the United States Senate, and Colonel Buford of Alabama, invaded Kansas with an armed force, in order to establish therein, by fraud and intimidation, the slave system of Missouri. One who was upon the ground during those memorable days could pen such a sentence from personal recollection; but at a distance, the writer must consult authorities, to avoid confounding the administrations of Reeder, Shannon, Geary, and Denver. The minute accuracy of Luke is the more striking, because his allusions to the shifting political divisions and administrations of Syria are simply incidental to his main purpose. But these serve to fix the chronology of the life of Christ, and to identify it as belonging to the local history of Palestine at a known period of the Roman empire.

Passing from the chronology to the chorography of the Gospels, we find in this the same natural, incidental, and always correct references to known matters of fact.

"The first consideration," says Lamartine, "that presents itself to the astonished mind, when opening a map of the globe for the purpose of studying the geography of religions, is that the little strip of earth between the head of the Mediterranean and the shores of the Red Sea, — a space almost entirely occupied by Mount Lebanon, the hills of Judæa, the mountains of Arabia, and the desert, — should have been the site, the cradle, and the scene of the three greatest religions adopted by mankind (India and China excepted), — the Jewish religion, the Christian religion, and the Mahometan religion. One would think, on contemplating a map of the world, that this little zone of rocks and sand between two translucent seas, and beneath stars of bright serenity, alone reflected more of divinity than all the residue of the globe."*

But more to our purpose than this rhapsody of the poet is the deliberate judgment of the greatest geographer of our age, Carl Ritter.

"In the Book of Joshua, which relates the conquest and distribution

* History of Turkey, I. 37.

of the land of Canaan, the geographical character is predominant. Its contents, therefore, in this respect, admit of being brought to the test of comparison with the ascertained condition of the country ; and the result is, that its accuracy has been fully established in the minutest details, even when the examination has been pursued into the most unimportant and trivial local relations. Its notices, not only of distinct regions, but of valleys, fountains, mountains, villages, have been confirmed, often with surprising certainty and particularity. The entire political and religious life of the Hebrews was interwoven in the closest manner, like a piece of network, with the geography of the land, far more so than is true of the modern European nations ; and hence the opportunity to verify the alleged or implied connection between places and events is the more perfect, and affords results the more satisfactory. Most decisive is the rebuke which infidelity has received from this new species of testimony ; it has been compelled to confess with shame that it has imposed on itself and on others by the unfounded doubts which it has raised against the truth of the Scriptures. The authenticity of the historical books of the Old Testament has been shown to be capable of vindication on a side hitherto too much overlooked ; their fidelity in all matters within the sphere of geography places a new argument in the hands of the defenders of Revelation.”*

What is true of the Book of Joshua is equally true of the Evangelistic narratives of the New Testament. The progress of modern researches in Palestine has subjected the chorography of the Gospels to the severest scrutiny, which it has sustained in the minutest particulars. The land of Palestine is peculiarly fitted to test the accuracy of the Scriptures in their geographical and local allusions. The smallness and isolation of the territory enable us to take in its whole area at one view, to understand the relations of its various parts, and to study the exact details of locality. The empires of Darius, of Alexander, of Augustus, of Napoleon, bewilder us by the vastness of their extent and the variety of countries and races embraced in them. These, too, were continually shifting their limits. But the life of Christ was confined to a territory not larger than Vermont. We can place Palestine, as it were, under the stereoscope, and inspect it at our leisure. For beside being circumscribed within such narrow boun-

* Ritter, quoted by Prof. Hackett, “Illustrations of Scripture,” p. 224.

daries, this country is isolated by strong physical features. "South and east inhospitable deserts, to the west the sea, shut it off from other lands, while Lebanon on the north bounds it by an almost insurmountable wall, stretching from the sea to the eastern desert." Nowhere else on the surface of the globe are the two conditions for the development of a world-religion — centrality and isolation — so wonderfully combined as in this hill-country between the Mediterranean and the Jordan, the wilderness of Arabia Petræa and the mountains of Northern Syria. The physical geography of Palestine is remarkably permanent. The clearing of forests, the neglect of agriculture, the gradual modifications of time, may have produced changes in the climate, in the aspect of the hills, and in the size and volume of the streams. But the general face of the country is to-day just what it was in the time of Christ, the time of David, the time of Joshua ; its great landmarks remain unchanged. The deep fissure of the Jordan is there, with the blue Lake of Genesareth above and the molten Sea of Death below ; the rocky wilderness is there, upon either side of the river ; the plain of Jericho, the mountainous ascent to Jerusalem, Zion, and the Mount of Olives, all marked by unaltered features ; the valley of Hinnom, the valley of Jehoshaphat, with the channel of the Kedron ; Joppa still looks upon the great western sea ; the plain of Sharon stretches northward to Carmel. The hill-country of Judæa, the hills and plains of Samaria, the vale of Shechem, with Ebal and Gerizim upon either hand, the great plain of Galilee, the vale of Nazareth, Tabor and Gilboa, Hermon and Lebanon, — every spot in nature that Jesus visited or looked upon is there unchanged. Hence we have the materials for the minutest comparison of the narrative of the Evangelists with the region of Christ's earthly life. If that narrative is found to contain serious inaccuracies, or is contradicted by the physical features of the country, then must our confidence in its authenticity be hopelessly shaken, and the Gospels pass at once from the category of historical productions into that of the legendary or the fictitious. The tone of extravagance in the reports of Du Chaillu with regard to the gorilla country, and the contradictions in his own journal, — though he

attributes these to the jumbling of two or three journals together by his amanuensis,— have led eminent men of science in England to doubt whether he has ever been in the region he professes to describe. “ He that is first in his own cause seemeth just ; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him.” Now the Evangelists have been searched and sifted as to localities and matters of fact in Palestine, from the days of Jerome’s *Onomasticon* to those of Robinson’s “ Biblical Researches,” and they have stood this test far more conclusively than Herodotus or Strabo, or any other writer of antiquity whose veracity and substantial accuracy are admitted by scholars. Upon this groundwork of fact their character as witnesses is established.

This comparison of the Evangelists with the local and physical record of Palestine is favored also by the frequent identification of ancient names through those in common use. The language of Palestine being the Arabic, the cognate of the Hebrew, and the language of a religion — the Mohammedan — which accepts the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as a preliminary revelation, it is easy to trace the origin of many present names of places in Palestine to the geography of the time of Christ and his Apostles, and even as far back as the age of Joshua and the conquest of Canaan. The Book of Joshua has been aptly compared to the Domesday Book of William the Conqueror. This book, still preserved in the British Exchequer, exhibits the state of landed property in England, its tenure and value, the quantity of meadow, pasture, forest, and arable land in each district, as reported by the king’s commissioners shortly after the Norman conquest. This chorographic survey has been the authority of title-deeds and boundary lines for later generations. It fixed the basis of military tenure and fealty to the crown, when the old Saxon estates were broken up, and Norman barons were transformed into English nobles. Coke, Blackstone, and all the best authorities in English law, recognize this great survey as a decisive *record* upon questions of ancient demesne. Just so the distribution of Canaan among the Israelites by Joshua was matter of permanent and decisive record concerning the inheritance of the tribes ; and “ the more we become ac-

quainted with the geography of Palestine through the discoveries of modern travellers, the more clearly do we perceive the correctness of all the boundary lines of the tribes, not only as regards their directions and windings, but also as to the heights and valleys over which they passed.”* Joshua himself gives us the old Canaanitish names of many of the cities of Palestine, though these fell into disuse after the Israelites had taken possession of the land. And in like manner we can trace in the present geographical nomenclature of Palestine the old land-roll and census prepared under the direction of Joshua the conqueror.

A striking instance of this is found in the recent probable identification of a series of towns in the inheritance of Naphtali, to wit, *En-hazor*, *Iron*, *Migdal-el*, *Horem*, and *Beth-anath* (Joshua xix. 37, 38). Upon Carl Zimmermann’s new *Karte von Galiläa*, constructed to illustrate the routes and researches of Dr. Ernst August Schulz, we find these several towns in their proper juxtaposition, in the valley that stretches in a northeasterly direction from Acre toward Lake Huleh : En-hazor in the *Ain Hazur*, near El Mughar ; Iron in *Yarōn*, northwest of Giscalia ; Beth-anath in *Ainata*, farther to the north. Migdal-el, Keil would identify with *Mejdal*, the Magdala of Matthew’s Gospel, on the western shore of the Lake of Genesareth ; but this is inadmissible. Horem is marked in most itineraries as unknown. Dr. William H. Thomson, formerly of Syria, now of New York, while exploring this valley, was led to suspect that Migdal-el and Horem were but parts of one compound name ; and in *Medj el-Kerûm*, which lies northwest of Ain Hazur, the long-sought identification is found. The Septuagint reads these two as one name, *Μεγαλααρίη*. Thus Joshua’s Domesday Book, confirmed by native tradition, corrects a false reading of King James’s translators.

The value of this native tradition in determining Biblical localities appears in the fact that the Greek and Roman names imposed upon Palestine have almost entirely disappeared, while the common people have kept alive, in a kindred dialect, the ancient Hebrew designations. Hence Robinson, who

* Keil, Commentary on Joshua, p. 51.

attached but little value to ecclesiastical traditions,—which may have originated either in credulity or in cupidity,—gives to this native nomenclature a weight beyond any other form of testimony collateral to the Bible and Josephus.

“There is in Palestine another kind of tradition, with which the monasteries have had nothing to do; and of which they have apparently in every age known little or nothing. I mean, *the preservation of the ancient names of places among the common people*. This is a truly national and native tradition; not derived in any degree from the influence of foreign convents or masters; but drawn in by the peasant with his mother’s milk, and deeply seated in the genius of the Semitic languages. The Hebrew names of places continued current in their Aramean form long after the times of the New Testament; and maintained themselves in the mouths of the common people, in spite of the efforts made by Greeks and Romans to supplant them by others derived from their own tongues. After the Muhammedan conquest, when the Aramæan language gradually gave place to the kindred Arabic, the proper names of places, which the Greeks could never bend to their orthography, found here a ready entrance; and have thus lived on upon the lips of the Arabs, whether Christian or Muslim, townsmen or Bedawin, even unto our own day, almost in the same form in which they have also been transmitted to us in the Hebrew Scriptures.” *

While the general topography of Palestine exhibits so many and so minute correspondences with the names and localities of the Old and New Testaments, the more prominent scenes in the life of Christ can be identified beyond a question. We may not be able to designate the Mount of the Beatitudes or that of the Transfiguration; the site of Capernaum may be uncertain; geographers may not agree which of two ruined villages represents the Cana of Galilee; but Bethlehem and Bethany, Jericho and Jerusalem, the Mount of Olives and the Valley of the Kedron, Sychar and Nazareth, and the Lake of Tiberias, are as definitely known as the stopping-places on the Hudson River Railroad. One feels as sure that the plain of Genesareth lay upon the lake of its name, as that Sing-Sing is on the Tappan Zee. One is as sure that the vale of Shechem lies between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, as that the Northampton meadows stretch out between Mount Holyoke and Mount Tom.

* Researches, I. 255.

Geographically, the life of Christ may be arranged in three sections,—though these will not represent its chronological order. The first section embraces the northern portion of Judæa and Samaria; the second, the region of Galilee; the third, the country beyond Jordan, known under the general name of Perea. This very division identifies the period and the region in which Christ appeared. The original distribution of Canaan by Joshua after the conquest was into twelve divisions, which took the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. But the Evangelists, though Jews, barely allude to these tribal divisions. The reference to Bethlehem as a city of Judah, and the description of Capernaum as “upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim,” are the only mention in the Gospels of the original Jewish divisions of Palestine. Those divisions, though substantially retained under the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, were nearly obliterated after the captivity, from which only remnants of Judah and Benjamin returned. But when Palestine was reduced to a Roman province, a new political division of the country was made, to provide offices for favorites, and to facilitate the government of a turbulent people. The Jewish historian, Josephus, and the classical geographer, Pliny, give substantially the following divisions: Judæa, which embraced the old tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Simeon, and Dan; Samaria, which took in Ephraim and parts of Issachar and Manasseh; Galilee, made up of Zebulun, Naphtali, Asher, and the northern possessions of Dan; Perea, on the east of Jordan, embracing Reuben and Gad; and the Decapolis, with its surrounding tetrarchies, embracing the half of Manasseh east of Jordan, and stretching northward to Anti-Lebanon and eastward to Damascus. Such were the political divisions imposed upon the Jews by the Romans, obliterating the ancient tribal divisions, which were the basis of their nationality. It was as if our State boundaries should be swallowed up in the military departments created by the general government.

Now the geographical references in the Gospels correspond throughout with this state of facts. “There followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judæa, and from beyond Jordan.”

Such is the general division. But just as the limits of our military departments and the names and functions of their commandants are continually changing, so these provinces and the titles of their rulers were frequently changed at the period to which we refer. Thus Judæa was subdivided into districts, the southernmost of which was called Idumæa ; and this was sometimes reckoned as a distinct province. Furthermore, around cities of the Decapolis there grew up petty kingdoms, or tetrarchies, such as Abilene and Trachonitis, which had governors of their own. This state of facts, which we have upon independent Jewish and Roman authorities, and which greatly complicated the political geography of Palestine by frequent and embarrassing changes, is also recognized in the incidental allusions of the Evangelists. “A great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judæa, and from Jerusalem, and from *Idumæa*, and from beyond Jordan ; and they about Tyre and Sidon,” on the old Phœnician coast, adjoining Galilee. (Mark iii. 7, 8.) “In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judæa, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of *Iturea* and of the region of *Trachonitis*, and Lysanias the tetrarch of *Abilene*.” (Luke iii. 1.) Luke has a certain methodical minuteness of time and place in his narrative, which we might expect from an educated physician. These references to a group of political provinces and their rulers, at a time when the boundaries of those provinces and the names and titles of their rulers were frequently changing, show at least the confidence of the historian in his own knowledge, and should predispose us to receive him as an authority in matters of fact. And since these passing allusions of Luke are confirmed by the more formal narrative of Josephus, and by fragmentary Roman history, their testimony to his accuracy is of the very highest order.

There are similar allusions by Matthew and Mark, which corroborate each other through circumstantial diversities. Thus Matthew tells us that, after feeding the four thousand in the Decapolis, Jesus “sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of *Magdala*.” (Matt. xv. 39.) Mark says, that “straightway he entered into a ship with his dis-

ciples, and came into the parts of *Dalmanutha*." Now, with one exception, all the cities of the Decapolis lay on the east of the lake and the Jordan ; the site of Magdala is well identified through the Arab village Mejdel, on the southwestern shore of the lake ; and Dalmanutha was in the same region.* Jesus must, therefore, have crossed the lake from Decapolis to the point where these two neighboring villages marked the shore. After this he goes again by ship to "the other side" of the lake, that is, to the eastern shore, where next we find him at Bethsaida, at the northeast corner of the lake, near the entrance of the Jordan, and thence he journeys northward into the coasts, or, as Mark says, "the towns of Cæsarea *Philippi*." This name is another proof of both historical and geographical accuracy. Familiar as is the history, we must cite its principal facts in evidence upon this point. There was a Cæsarea upon the coast of the Mediterranean, forty miles north of Joppa, founded by Herod the Great, and so named in honor of Cæsar Augustus. This is often mentioned in the Book of Acts. There Philip labored ; there Peter visited Cornelius ; there Herod died ; there Paul had his hearing before Felix, and again before Festus and Agrippa. This was the Cæsarea of Palestine. But when Philip was tetrarch of Trachonitis, he enlarged and embellished one of its cities, *Panium*, as his capital, changed its name to Cæsarea, in honor of the Emperor, and then added his own name, Cæsarea *Philippi*, to distinguish it from the older and more conspicuous city on the sea-coast. This Cæsarea *Philippi*, nestling under the very shadow of Hermon, near the head-waters of Jordan, was the most northern point of our Lord's journeyings. The minute accuracy of the historian in the use of this name is seen in the fact that, about thirty years previously, the city was known exclusively by the name of Panias, and that twenty years later its name was again changed to Neronias, in flattery of Nero ; after which it was long known as Cæsarea Paneas.† Thus the great library of Paris has changed its name from Royal to Imperial, and again to Royal, and then to National, and once more to Imperial, according to the political administration of the capi-

* Robinson, II. 397.

† Josephus, Ant. XVIII. 2. § 1, and XX. 9. § 4.

tal ; and the mention of either name suggests a corresponding epoch of the government. Accuracy in such details, when purely incidental to the main purpose of the writer, affords the strongest presumption possible of his trustworthiness as an historian.

In the simple narratives of the journeys of Christ, when time is given, it accords well with the relative distances of places ; and towns and districts are always named in their proper relations to each other. From Nazareth to Cana is about twelve miles over the hills ; from Cana the route to Capernaum is an almost continuous descent,— a distance of some fifteen miles. The nobleman coming from Capernaum finds Jesus at Cana in the after part of the day, and beseeches him to “ come down ” and heal his son. Next morning, as he is hastening home, he meets his servants, who inform him that his son began to mend the previous afternoon. Taking into account the mode of Eastern travel, these dates correspond exactly with the distances. From Capernaum to Nain is barely twenty miles ; accordingly we find Jesus one day at Capernaum, and “ the day after ” at Nain (Luke vii. 11). In going northward from Jerusalem to Galilee, Jesus “ must needs go through Samaria ” ; and in Galilee, within another jurisdiction, he would be comparatively safe from the rage of the Sanhedrim. The populous district about Lake Tiberias,* the chief scene of his labors, had near it, upon the northwest, mountainous solitudes to which he could withdraw for seclusion and prayer. On the eastern shore of the lake, over against Galilee, lay Gergesa and the country of the Gadarenes. Here, too, as above noted, was the broad region known as Perea, traversing which southward “ beyond Jordan,” to the ford at Jericho, our Lord would thence come to Bethany and Jerusalem. Bethany, nestling under the eastward slope of Olivet, just out of sight of the capital, was an easy and pleasant resort by night, after a day spent in the discussions of the temple.

Thus may we trace step by step the earthly life of Jesus upon the soil of Palestine. It is written upon the hills and the valleys, upon the lake and the river, upon the desert places of

* The Gospels make no mention of *Tiberias*, built several years after Christ. This omission is a confirmation.

Jordan and Galilee, on the smiling fields of Shechem and the fair slopes of Olivet, as legibly and imperishably as if for each succeeding generation Jesus had there repeated his lowly, patient wanderings, his works of sublime beneficence. To doubt this is to doubt everything in human history. No amount of testimony could make more certain the reality of that earthly life ; no geographical exploration, no surveyor's measurements, though these might multiply points of correspondence and identity, could make more sure a life certified by so many points unchanged in name and locality, and whose distances and bearings so completely underlie the narrative. The very stones are witnesses for the story. Say what men will of the character and mission of Christ, of his work, his doctrine, his death, they must accept the fact of his life on earth, or burn up every record of the past, and sink the land of Palestine in the depths of the sea.

The political vassalage of Palestine, the inertia of Oriental society, and the bigotry of race and of religion, have combined to keep the features of the country and the location of its principal places more nearly like what they were two thousand years ago, than are the physical features and historical sites of any other land, Egypt alone excepted. For centuries its Turkish masters have barred it against the encroachments of modern civilization, and now the mutual jealousies of Christian powers keep it in a state of chronic supineness. Hence the verisimilitude of the Gospel narratives when read amid the every-day incidents of life in the Holy Land. Even the archaeology of Palestine is a thing of the present ; its antiquities are living realities. And, so far as scenery, climate, places, manners, and customs are concerned, much of the Bible might be reproduced there to-day, as all of it must at some time have been written there. To a reader not versed in Italian, the poem of Dante may at first seem obscure and dry, from the multitude of its local and historical allusions. But when one has resolutely mastered these, they in turn place him *en rapport* with the mind of the poet, and the once tedious page becomes a living annal of its times. Michel Angelo had brought the pencil of the greatest artist of Italy to illuminate her greatest poet ; and the loss of his illustrations was a calamity to the

world of letters no less than to the world of art. But a modern artist has revived this difficult task ; and as you turn over the pages of Dante's Inferno illustrated by Gustave Doré, you gain a realization of the poet's meaning, so vivid and intense, that you seem to walk with him pensive and shuddering through the dismal caverns of hell, fascinated by the very horror that repels you. The pictured pages are themselves a poem ; they give a visible shape to the conceptions of the poet, and by their shadowy light you look into the mysterious depths of that great soul. Yet this is only imagination illustrated by imagination. But in the land of Palestine,—rocks, hills, rivers, valleys, lakes, fountains, trees, and flowers,—we have a photographed copy of the life of Christ, fact illustrating fact, and making that life of august mysteries a reality of earth and time. Every allusion of Christ to objects in nature belongs to Palestine, and must have been suggested and uttered there.

We look to the geographer, the botanist, the naturalist, for minute and classified descriptions of the soil, climate, and products of a country, of its agriculture, its fauna, and its flora. But from the native orator or poet we expect passing allusions to such physical scenery, and such animal and vegetable life, as he is familiar with in his own surroundings ; and these allusions may serve to localize the speech or poem, as belonging to the Occident or the Orient, to the North or the South, to England or to Italy. Bryant's "Prairies" could not have been written by an Englishman, nor Wordsworth's descriptions of Rydal and Windermere by an American. The verifying a literary production by its topical allusions becomes obvious and natural when the country of its birth has prominent peculiarities of scenery, climate, or productions. Now Palestine combines in a remarkable manner the climates and productions of the temperate and the tropical zones, concentrated within a small area. Of the valley of the Jordan, and the country of Genesareth, Josephus says : "One may call this place the ambition of nature, where it forces those plants that are naturally enemies to one another to agree together ; it is a happy contention of the seasons, as if every one of them laid claim to this country ; — the hardier trees, that require the

coldest air, flourish there plentifully ; there are palm-trees also, which grow best in hot air ; while fig-trees and olives grow near them, which yet require an air that is more temperate." Much as the soil and productions of Palestine have deteriorated since the land has been trodden under foot of strangers, and much as the climate itself has changed, from the clearing away of forests, there yet remains in the vegetable and animal kingdoms of the Holy Land, and in the agricultural habits of its people, a striking confirmation of the allusions to soil and climate in the life of Christ.

Did John the Baptist appear in the wilderness, living upon locusts and wild honey ? The uncultivated, uninhabited region of Judæa toward the Dead Sea, whose trees and rocks drip honey from the nests of wild bees, is there to certify to the story. The contemporary Pliny informs us, that the Parthians esteem the locust a choice food,* and that some tribes of the Ethiopians subsist on nothing but locusts, which are smoke-dried and salted as their provision for the year ; † and a modern Jewish Rabbi, long resident in Palestine, mentions that in 1837, when myriads of locusts covered the land, "the Arabs roasted these insects and ate them with much relish." ‡ The camel, as of old, is the beast of burden, and his hair is woven into a coarse cloth for garments such as the Baptist wore. The banks of the Jordan are lined with reeds "shaken by the wind." The fox still has his hiding-places in the hill-country of Palestine, where the Son of Man was a homeless wanderer ; serpents and vipers abound, to illustrate the comparison of the Pharisees to their venomous brood ; the scorpion haunts ruins, and hides in the crevices of the walls, its terrible sting representing the fierceness of "the enemy," over whom Jesus gave his disciples power. If an ass or a camel die by the roadside, wheresoever the carcass is, the eagles or vultures * are quickly gathered together. The ravens, true to their instinct, drive out their young from the nest to seek their food, having neither storehouse nor barn. The dove is still the favorite bird of the house and the grove, and is held sacred by Mohammedans, as the symbol of harmless-

* Book II. c. 32, 35.

† Book VI. c. 35.

‡ Schwartz's Palestine, p. 300.

§ Pliny, X. c. 7.

ness and purity. The sparrow is still so annoying by its numbers upon the house-tops, and so little relished as food, that two might be bought for a farthing. The ox and the ass are still the favorite beasts of burden, and the ass's colt is the common saddle-beast of the poorer people,—even as when Jesus came meekly “riding on the foal of an ass.” Sheep and goats, however, are the most numerous of the domestic animals of Palestine; and every allusion to these in the parables and discourses of Christ may be verified among the flocks and sheepfolds of the country as one sees them to-day. At certain seasons of the year the shepherd lives with his sheep in the open air, abiding in the field keeping watch over the flock by night. At other times, when cold or danger threatens, all the flocks of the village are gathered within a walled enclosure, whose door is in the keeping of the porter. In the morning each shepherd calls out his own sheep, and they, knowing his voice, follow him to their feeding-places, where, armed with sling, staff, or other weapon, he watches them against the wolf or the robber. When the time of dividing the flocks comes, the sheep are separated from the goats.

In the open country—the fields unbroken by fences and traversed by the highway—the sower may drop seed upon stony places or on the wayside, to be trodden under foot of men. When the wheat is in the ear, the traveller, following the path through the field, may pluck his hands full, rub out the grain, and eat. In marshy spots the *zowan*, or tare, will often spring up and choke the wheat, where only good seed had been sown. The barley-loaf remains a common article of diet. At harvest-time one sees the oxen treading out the grain upon the great stone floor in the open air, where the wind carries away the chaff, or the fan in the hand of the husbandman thoroughly purges his floor of dust and refuse. At evening, in the doorways, the women, usually two, sit together at the millstones, grinding the meal for the next morning. For the baking, as wood is scarce, dry weeds and grass are gathered to be cast into the little oven of earth, and burned.

If the traveller in Palestine would rest by the wayside, as he approaches a village, he will find the well or the fountain

to which the women resort to draw water ; and he may sit under the wide-spread branches of the sycamore,—wholly unlike the American tree of that name,—reminding himself how easily Zaccheus, from such a tree, could scrutinize the crowd as it passed along ; and also how great must be the faith that would pluck up this deep-set tree by the roots. Perhaps near by he may see the mustard-seed grown to a shrub in which birds make their nests ; or by some brook or moistened valley, near Tabor or Nazareth, his eye may feast upon the lilies of the field, with which all the glory of Solomon could not compare. The plain of Jericho might still furnish palm-branches for the royal welcome of the Son of David ; the fig-tree would still illustrate his parables ; the olive would yield its oil to the good Samaritan ; the vineyard, with its wine-press and tower, with its well-pruned vines and abundant fruits, is at hand as a commentary upon the last discourses of Jesus ; while the buckthorn and a species of cactus, simulating the grape and the fig, remain to point the proverb that “ men do not gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thistles.” Perhaps in the early season one might be attracted to a fig-tree by its promising foliage, to find “ nothing thereon but leaves only,”—a symbol of a cultivated intellect with an unbelieving heart.

The life of Christ must take its place in history among the realities of earth and time. We may not be able to trace its every link, to identify its every footstep ; “ here, perchance, we may wander ; there miss the right clew ; yet, if with a true and living faith we seek to bring home to our hearts the great features of the Evangelical history,—to journey with our Master over the lonely mountains of Galilee ; to sit with him beside the busy waters of the Lake of Genesareth ; to follow his footsteps into remote and half-pagan lands, or to hang on his lips in the courts of his Father’s house,—we shall not seek in vain. The history of the Gospels will be more and more to us a living history.”* The patient study of that history, in the candid and liberal spirit of true criticism, can lead only to the conclusion of the reality of the life of Christ as

* Ellicott, pp. 141, 142.

there recorded. And whatever harmonistic and chronological difficulties may yet remain in certain passages of that life, we may gladly observe, with Bishop Ellicott, "that order and connection have been found where there was once deemed to be only confusion and incoherence,— that the inspired narratives are regarded no longer as discrepant, but as self-explanatory,— and that honest investigation is showing more and more clearly, that what one inspired writer has left unrecorded another has often supplied, with an incidental preciseness of adjustment which is all the more convincing from being seen and felt to be undesigned." *

For such a study we know of no more agreeable and instructive helpers than the two authors whose works we have now brought to the notice of the reader. Each should be read in its own order; Mr. Andrews's, for the thorough historical and geographical groundwork of the life of Christ; Bishop Ellicott's, for the devout realization of that life upon this basis of actuality. Mr. Andrews preserves the calm, exact, critical style of the historian, never indulging in homiletic reflections or in devotional meditations; yet he is not wanting in fervor of conviction or in vivacity of narration. His work is by far the most complete, trustworthy, and satisfactory digest of the later results of criticism upon the life of Christ that has appeared in the English language. Nothing of importance seems to have escaped his notice, and no point has been evaded or slurred over because of unresolved difficulties. Bishop Ellicott's volume retains the popular and hortatory style of discourses which assume the inspired character of the Gospels. They are therefore less forcible as an argument for the credibility of the Gospels, but are rich and eloquent in the portraiture of the life of Christ. Nor are they wanting in a critical analysis of doubtful points, which is carefully elaborated in learned notes. Thus the two works supplement each other; and if we study them connectedly, the things narrated of the earthly life of Christ "will seem so close, so near, so true, that our faith in Jesus will be such as no sophistry can weaken, no doubtfulness becloud."

* Page 220. We do not moot the question of inspiration, the fact of which Bishop Ellicott assumes.